Near-Term Improvements

5.0

5.1 Introduction

Near-term improvements are generally those that can be funded through existing departmental programs, do not require NEPA documentation, and cost less than 5 million dollars.

A central goal of the Kenilworth Avenue Corridor Study is to provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the neighborhoods of the Kenilworth Avenue Corridor. Since these types of improvements can be implemented quickly at little cost, they tend to be the predominant recommendations for near-term improvements in the corridor.

This chapter, therefore, recommends several different types of physical changes to improve the quality of the local environment for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

The near-term improvement projects may be implemented in conjunction with each other or independently, depending on availability of funding. Projects are summarized in Table 5.1 and discussed in detail on the following pages.

Figure 5.1: Near-term Improvements

Proj. No.	Title	Description	Benefits	Estimated Cost (2005)
1	East Capitol Street Scenario EC-1	A new connection is made to allow traffic on westbound East Capitol Street to exit southbound and northbound onto Kenilworth Avenue.	• Urban Design	$2,500,000
2	Kenilworth Avenue Slip Ramps Safety Improvements	The slip ramps between Kenilworth Avenue and the parallel service road north of Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue are consolidated and realigned to improve safety in the corridor and improve traffic operations on Kenilworth Avenue.	• Safety • Visual Quality	$1,000,000
3	Corridor Landscaping	Generally improves visual quality of the corridor through implementation of a corridor wide landscaping, signage, and street furniture program.	• Urban Design • Open Space and Waterfront Connections • Visual Quality	$3,000,000
4	Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements	Generally improves the pedestrian and bicycle throughway, curb ramps, pedestrian roadway, lighting and signal, and bicycle parking through specific projects and as part of area wide programs.	• Pedestrian Connectivity • Public Transit Access • Safety	$1,200,000
5	Kenilworth Avenue Lighting and Signage Improvements	Additional lighting is installed throughout the corridor in locations where lighting is lacking and where levels were found to be inadequate. Similarly, signing is upgraded to meet FHWA Standards and to effectively communicate major exits.	• Urban Design • Visual Quality • Safety	$1,500,000

Table 5.1: Summary of Near-Term Improvements

5.2 Improvement Projects

Project No. 1: East Capitol Street Scenario EC-1

Categories of Improvement
- Urban Design

Description
A new connection is made to allow traffic on westbound East Capitol Street to exit southbound and northbound onto Kenilworth Avenue. A new connector is constructed just west of Kenilworth Avenue at a 90° angle to East Capitol Street. This new connector intersects and crosses the existing exit ramp for eastbound East Capitol Street to northbound Kenilworth Avenue. After it crosses the northbound exit ramp, it merges with the southbound ramp from eastbound East Capitol Street.

This project requires that East Capitol Street be widened just west of Kenilworth Avenue to allow construction of two left-turn lanes onto the new connector. It also requires new traffic signals at the connector intersection with East Capitol Street, and at the intersection of the new connector with the exiting northbound exit ramp from eastbound East Capitol Street. Minor modifications are required to the existing southbound and northbound ramps to accommodate the new connector.

This project is an intermediate step to providing full movement at this interchange. After Scenario EC-1 is complete, building Scenario EC-2 completes the interchange to allow all movements. No pedestrian or bicycle improvements are included.

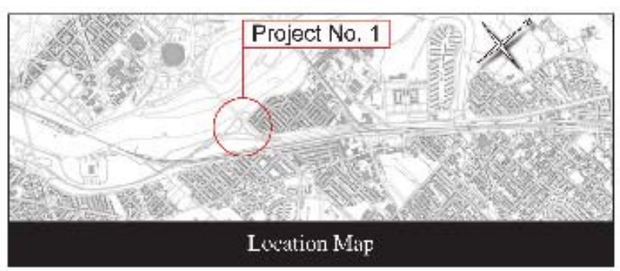


Figure 5.2: East Capitol Street Scenario EC-1

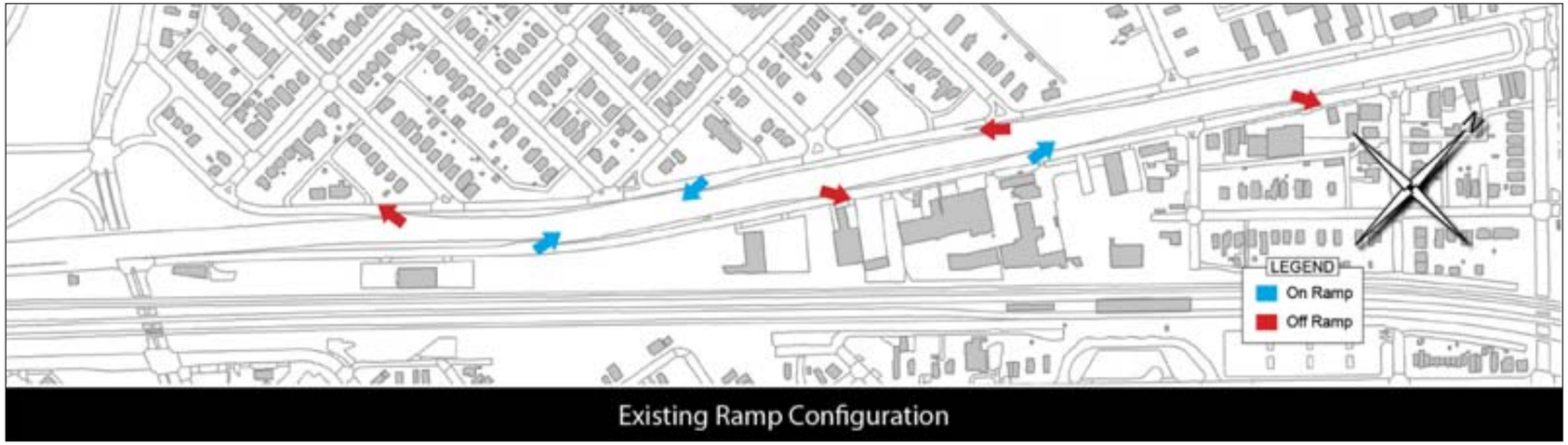
Project No. 2: Kenilworth Avenue Slip Ramps Safety Improvements

Categories of Improvement
- *Safety*
- *Visual Quality*

Description

The on- and off-ramps between Kenilworth Avenue and the parallel service road north of Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue are consolidated and realigned to improve safety in the corridor and improve traffic operations on Kenilworth Avenue.

Concurrent with this project, a program to monitor traffic conditions during the reconstruction of the Nannie Helen Burroughs interchange which require a long-term lane closure in both directions of Kenilworth Avenue will be implemented. This provides a unique opportunity to evaluate whether or not a two-lane reconstruction of Kenilworth Avenue is a viable option through observation of real-time traffic conditions. The final recommendation as to whether or not Option 2 (as discussed in the study) can be implemented will be contingent upon that analysis.



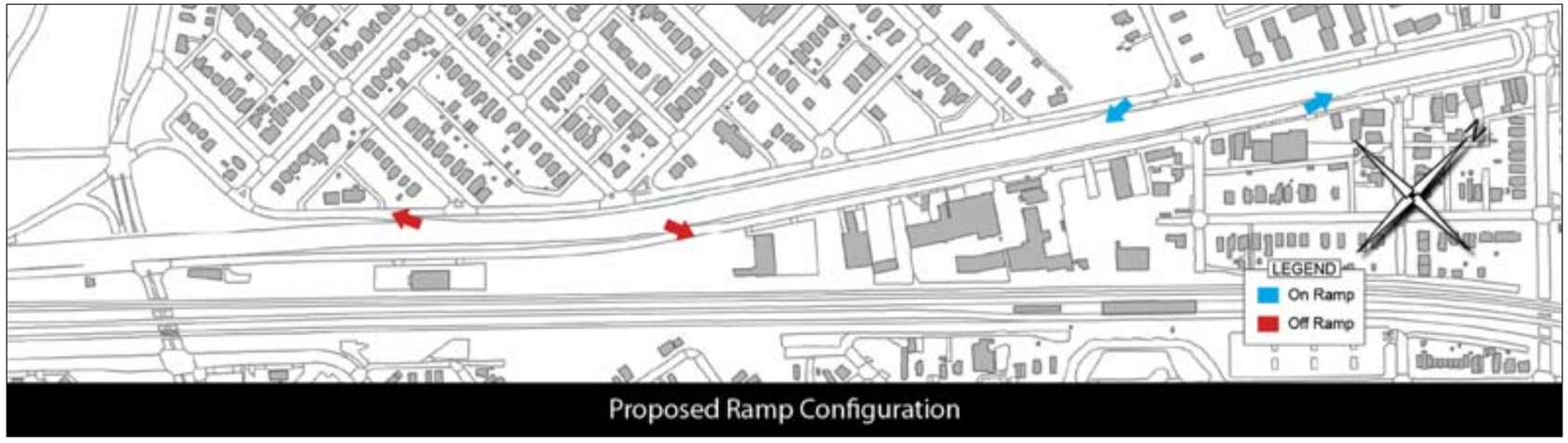


Figure 5.3: Plan between Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue and Eastern Avenue

Project No. 3: Corridor Landscaping

Categories of Improvement
- *Urban Design*
- *Open Space and Waterfront Connections*
- *Visual Quality*

Description

This project meets the long-term goal of improving the visual experience along the corridor. The landscape improvements unify the corridor and visually link the various areas and land uses. A consistent style and pattern of landscaping, signage, and street furniture shall be implemented along the entire corridor consistent with the Anacostia Waterfront Transportation Architectural Design Standards. In addition, distinct character areas shall be identified and developed with additional design treatments that will highlight the corridor's unique areas.

This project will strengthen the existing landscape buffers along the corridor by improving maintenance and installing additional plantings that are consistent with the overall landscape vision for the corridor. This project also provides buffers between areas of conflicting use or character, such as between Pennsylvania Avenue and East Capitol Street and between the CSX Railroad and Kenilworth Avenue.

The landscape improvement program should focus on the following areas along the Kenilworth Avenue Corridor:

- **Landscape Treatment and Maintenance:** Planting areas currently include wooded areas, park-like expanses of lawn with shade trees, buffer planting strips, grassy medians with minimal if any trees or shrubs, and sidewalk tree boxes for street trees. In addition, there are areas where street trees conflict with overhead utility lines, as well as some poorly-maintained areas where invasive exotic species, such as tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), have been allowed to grow. Current maintenance appears to be limited primarily to mowing. Landscaping projects should focus on developing an overall landscape

Figure 5.4: Cross Section A
Two lane Kenilworth Avenue with green shoulder and landscaped median. The median and green shoulders could be designed to retain stormwater during storm events.

Figure 5.5: Cross Section B
Three lane Kenilworth Avenue with landscapeing between the mainline and service lanes, and a landscaped median.

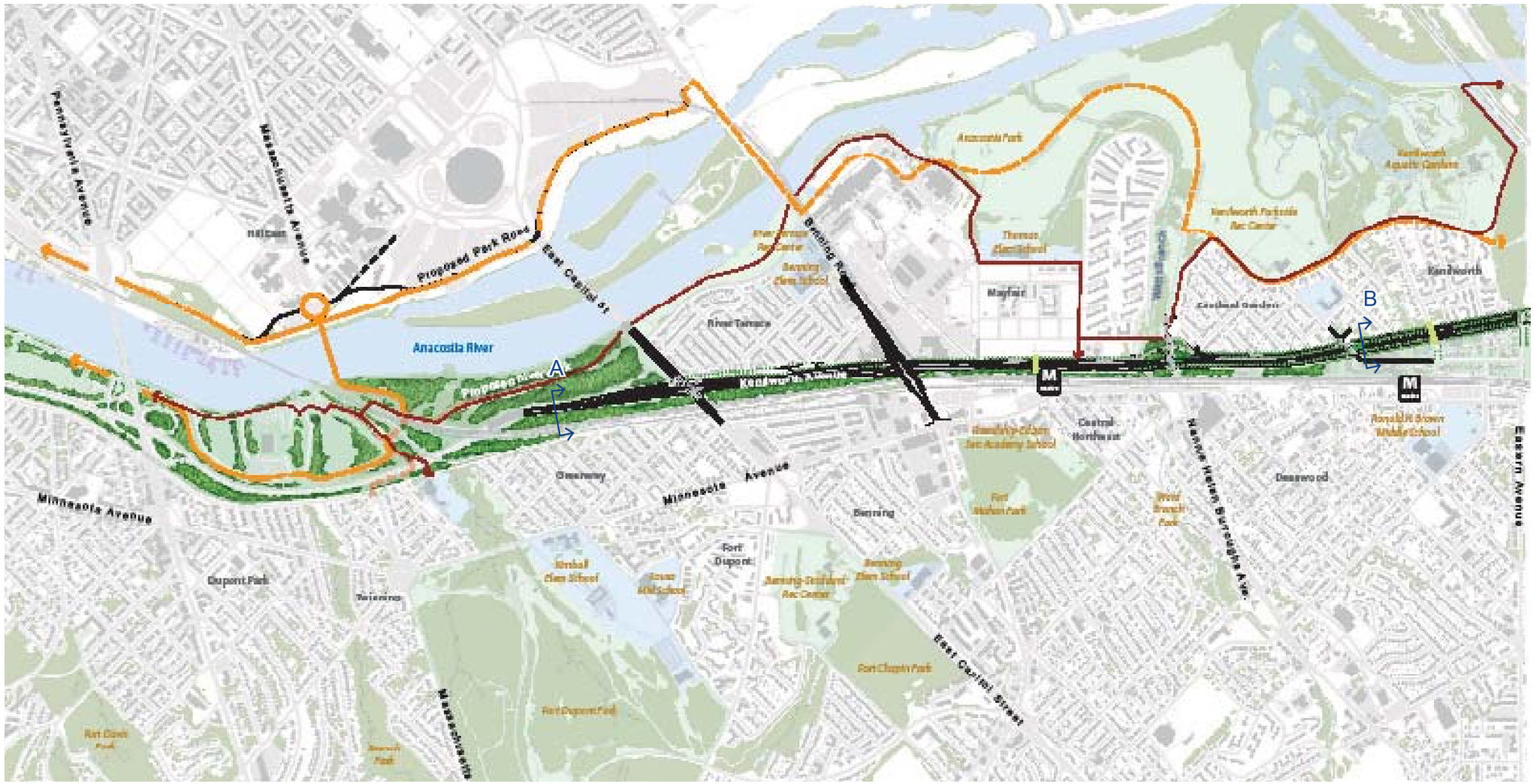


Figure 5.6: Landscape Improvements

concept to enhance the park-like setting, streetscape, and gateway areas along Kenilworth Avenue. Maintenance will be reduced by replacing turf with appropriate low-maintenance groundcover where possible.

- **Lighting**: The Kenilworth Avenue Corridor has multiple types of single- and double-fixture pole and fixture types. Poles are located either on the perimeter of the roadway or in the median barrier. In order to unify the corridor and provide adequate lighting that is appropriate to the segment, consistent pole and fixture types should be chosen in accordance with the Anacostia Waterfront Transportation Architectural Design Standards. In addition, it should be determined if the number of poles can be reduced by relocating and replacing single-fixture poles with double-fixture poles.

- **Public Art**: At select locations, public art that highlights the character of the local area should be introduced, either as individual improvements or as part of a larger project.

- **Barriers and Guard Rails**: Metal and concrete barriers of various types and sizes installed on medians, retaining walls, and overhead structures contribute to the visual clutter along the Kenilworth Avenue corridor. A system of railings and barriers consistent with the Anacostia Waterfront Transportation Architectural Design Standards will streamline and simplify the corridor.

- **Bridges**: Existing vehicular, railway, and Metrorail bridges are of inconsistent materials, colors, and design, and are in poor condition, and contribute to a cluttered, confusing, and intimidating feeling for motorists and pedestrians. Improvements should focus on developing a consistent system of aesthetic treatment for railings and lighting with similar materials, colors, and fixtures to the George Washington Memorial Parkway, New York Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue, or the Baltimore-Washington Parkway.

- **Signage**: Existing signage is poorly located, inappropriately sized, and poorly distributed. Commercial signage adds to the visual clutter and makes wayfinding difficult. Improvements should focus on developing a consistent system of signs to identify gateways, neighborhoods, and local destinations. The number of signs should be reduced by integrating information in highway sign system and use median planting to screen commercial signs where appropriate.

- **Gateways**: There are three major gateways to the District of Columbia along Kenilworth Avenue within the study area: East Capitol Street, Pennsylvania Avenue and Eastern Avenue. Currently, these are not identified or celebrated as gateways. Improvements should create a welcoming and greener look by enhancing the gateways with attractive landscaping, lighting, signage, and railing finishes similar to the treatments of the New York Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue bridges over the Anacostia River.

- **Overhead Utilities**: Overhead power and telecommunication lines clutter the views and the public sidewalk areas on the eastern edge of the corridor north of East Capitol Street. Overhead powerlines often conflict with street trees, which have been inappropriately pruned to accommodate the wires. Overhead utility lines should ideally be buried and street trees and medians replanted.

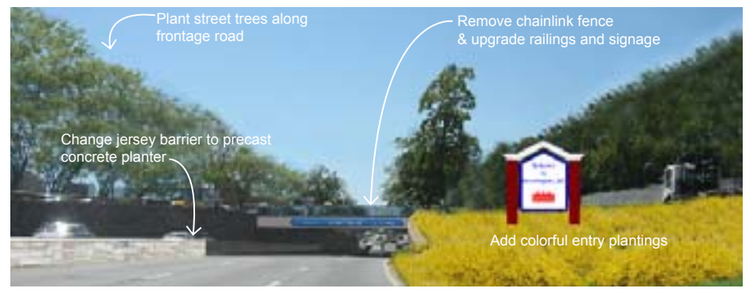
Existing View to the north of Benning Road

Simulated view after proposed improvements

Existing View to the south of East Capitol Street

Simulated view after proposed improvements

Existing View at Eastern Avenue



Simulated view after proposed improvements

Project No. 4: Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements

Categories of Improvement
- *Pedestrian Connectivity*
- *Public Transit Access*
- *Safety*

The pedestrian and bicycle improvement recommendations aim to improve the pedestrian and bicycle throughways, curb ramps, pedestrian roadways, lighting, signaling, and bicycle parking as described under general guidelines below. These improvements have been identified by location, as illustrated in Figure 5.7 on the following page and summarized under project locations. Additional details are provided in Appendix F. Where appropriate, these improvements will be coordinated with the Great Streets Initiative.

General Guidelines

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE THOROUGHFARES

The pedestrian and bicycle throughways include sidewalks, marked crosswalks, shared–use paths, and bicycle pavement markings such as bike lanes. These facilities help separate non-motorized users from the cars, trucks, and buses that use the roadway, and to remind drivers that they must yield to pedestrians and bicyclists. Improvements are recommended in six categories:

- **Sidewalks**: Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of streets within the corridor, unless pedestrians are prohibited or the street does not provide a logical connection to any destination. Eliminate gaps to provide continuous pedestrian access through neighborhoods. Sidewalks are not meant for primary bicycle use due to the number of driveways, which are a hazard to bicyclists.

- **Marked Crosswalks**: Safe and convenient roadway crossings are essential to pedestrian circulation. Special pavers or bricks could be used to mark the crosswalks and enhance the character of the main pedestrian areas.

Crosswalks should be marked with high-visibility thermoplastic markings like those striped across 44th Street at Gault Street, NE.

- **Bike Lanes**: Bike lanes designated are parts of the roadway that are designated by striping, signing, and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists. They shall be a minimum of five-feet wide and be provided on both sides of the roadway (except one-way streets). Install bicycle lanes in accordance with the DC Bicycle Master Plan.

- **Shared-Use Paths**: Shared-use paths, such as the Watts Branch Trail and future Anacostia Riverwalk Trail, are an important component of the bicycle and pedestrian transportation system in the corridor and need improvement.

- **Wide Sidewalks**: Wide sidewalks provide additional comfort for pedestrians and can provide bicyclists with the opportunity to ride along a road without being in traffic. These facilities are typically installed within the roadway right-of-way.

CURB RAMPS

Two types of curb ramp improvements are recommended to provide access between sidewalks and the crosswalks in the Kenilworth Avenue Corridor:

Adding median islands at several important crosswalks can reduce motor vehicle speeds and make it easier for pedestrians to cross one direction of traffic at a time (right).

- **Construct New Curb Ramps**: Accessible curb ramps should be provided at every intersection, however, a number of intersections in the corridor are missing one or more curb ramps. Provide a curb ramp for each crosswalk extending from a corner rather than a single curb ramp pointing into the center of the intersection.

- **Reconstruct Existing Curb Ramps**: Curb ramps are present at most crosswalks in the corridor, however, a large number of these ramps do not meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines.

PEDESTRIAN ROADWAY

Roadway design improvements include modifications to roadways between the curbs. Recommended roadway design improvements in the corridor include

- **Curb Extensions**: Curb extensions increase the visibility of pedestrians waiting to cross the roadway, reduce pedestrian crossing distances, reduce motor vehicle speeds, and improve pedestrian safety.

Intersection lights should be of a pedestrian scale and illuminate all crosswalks at an intersection.

- **Pedestrian Crossing (Median) Islands**: Pedestrian crossing islands allow pedestrians to cross one direction of motor vehicle traffic at a time.

LIGHTING AND SIGNAL

Lighting improvements make walking safer between important destination points within the corridor. Properly designed pedestrian countdown signals help in crossing busy roadways and make for a safer experience. Improvements include:

- **Roadway Lighting**: Improving roadway lighting reduces nighttime pedestrian crashes and shall illuminate all pedestrian crosswalks and be of a pedestrian scale.

- **Pedestrian Signals**: Provide pedestrian signals heads at all intersections that have traffic signals so as to indicate clearance time for pedestrians to complete crossing the street.

U-shaped bicycle racks provide short-term bicycle parking at train stations, bus stops, stores, parks, schools, and other locations.

BICYCLE PARKING

Improvements to accommodate bicycle transportation needs include:

- **Bicycle Racks**: Bicycle racks provide short-term bicycle parking in locations that are convenient to stores, parks, bus stops, and transit stations. Bike racks are currently provided at the Minnesota Avenue and Deanwood Metrorail Stations; however, they are not within view of the station manager. Coordinate with WMATA to study relocating bicycle racks inside both of the stations to help deter bicycle theft. Install small bicycle racks at bus stops, schools, parks, and store entrances in the corridor (requires coordination with WMATA, the National Park Service, and retail businesses.

- **Bicycle Lockers**: Bicycle lockers are used for longer-term bicycle parking and provide greater protection for bicycles. Currently, there are several lockers available at the Minnesota Avenue Metrorail Station. Coordinate with WMATA to evaluate the demand for additional bike lockers at the Minnesota Avenue and Deanwood Metrorail Stations. Study the need for bike lockers at select schools within the corridor.

Project Locations

See Appendix for more details on the following projects

Benning Road Reconstruction

- At the intersection of Minnesota Avenue and Benning Road, add pedestrian signals, new crosswalks, reduce turning radii, add and median islands.
- At the crossings of 36th Street and Kenilworth Avenue Freeway service roads, make geometric improvements, traffic signal improvements, and stripe new cross-walks to provide safer crossings.
- At the Fort Circle Trail at Benning Road (Benning Road and 42nd Street), improve pedestrian and bicycle crossings, including trail crossing warning signs and directional signage, for trail users.

Nannie Helen Burroughs Bridge Reconstruction

- At the Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue and Kenilworth Avenue Interchange, provide pedestrian/bicycle access under freeway; connect Watts Branch Trail to Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens; add cross-walks and curb ramps at intersection of NHB and Kenilworth Terrace; stripe crosswalks at intersection of NHB and Minnesota Avenue.

Anacostia Trail, Phase I

- At the Anacostia Road crossings between River Terrace and Anacostia Trail, add new crosswalks and curb ramps between River Terrace and the trail.

Minnesota Avenue Safety Improvements, Phase I

- At the Minnesota Avenue Crossing on the east side of Minnesota Avenue Metro Station, provide median islands, new cross-walk, and possibly new pedestrian signals between school and Metro Station.

Pedestrian Bridge and Tunnel Rehabilitation

- Work with WMATA/private developer at Parkside to improve pedestrian bridge across from Minnesota Avenue Metrorail Station. Improve bridge and tunnel lighting.

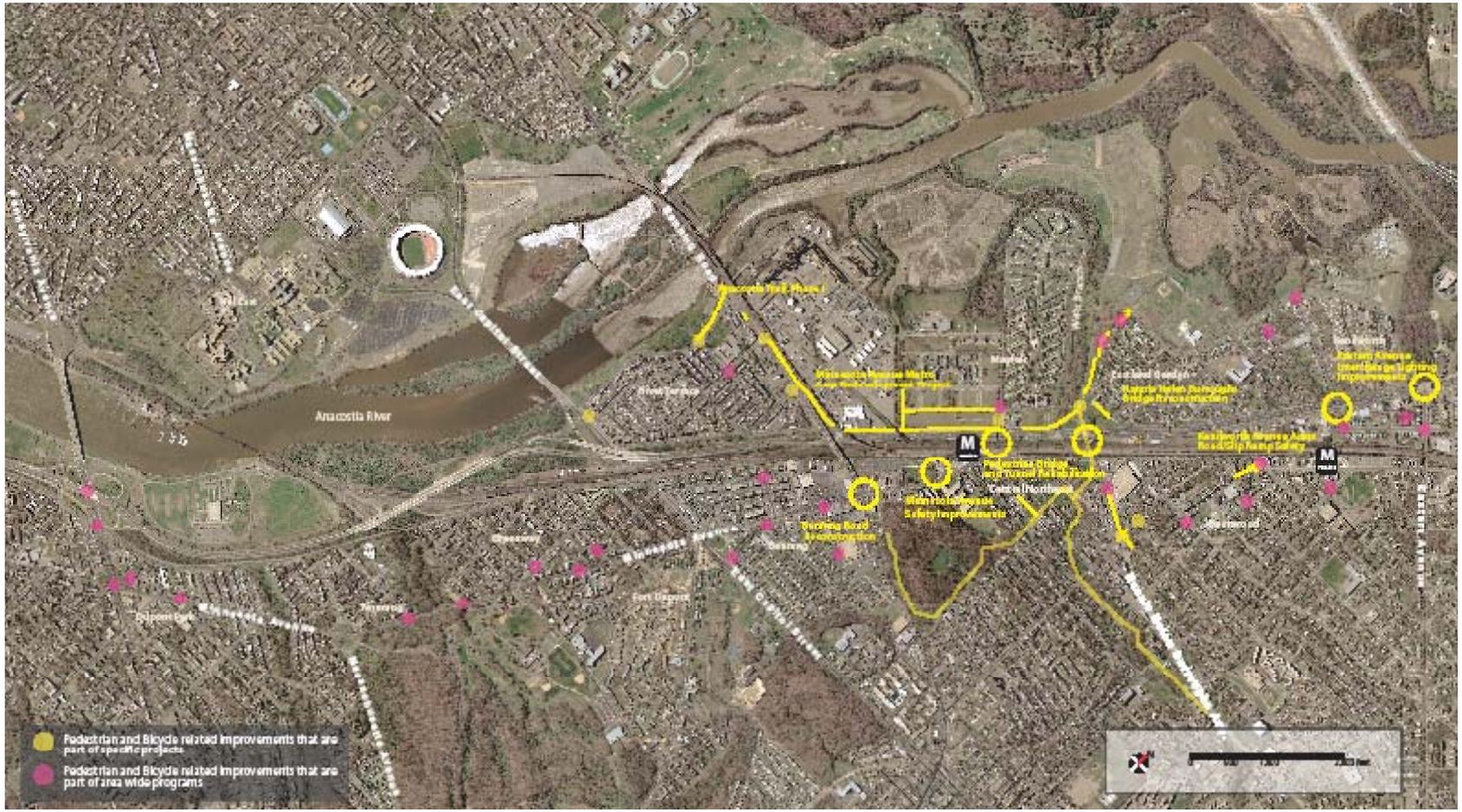


Figure 5.7: Pedestrian and Bicycle Related Improvements

Pedestrian Bridge and Tunnel Rehabilitation

- Work with WMATA to improve pedestrian bridge structure along Douglas Street, and improve lighting on bridge and in tunnel.

Kenilworth Avenue Access Road/Slip Ramp Safety Improvement Project*

- Along the Kenilworth Avenue Access Roads, stripe 11- to 12-foot wide travel lane to slow traffic and make driver movements more predictable, improve pedestrian crossings, and add traffic calming measures such as curb extensions to reduce traffic speeds.

Sidewalk, Curb, and Alley Maintenance Program

- Establish a program to maintain sidewalks, curbs, and alleys throughout the corridor. Provide missing sidewalks, add curb ramps, and meet ADA requirements for all sidewalks and curb ramps. Improve side-walks near the Deanwood Avenue Metro Station and curb ramps at the Pennsylvania Avenue interchange, as well as areas with high levels of pedestrian activity

Crosswalk Striping Maintenance Program

- Establish a program to maintain cross-walk striping throughout the corridor. Stripe crosswalks at intersections where necessary, especially along Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue and 44th Street, in areas with high levels of pedestrian activity.

Pedestrian Signal Maintenance Program

- Establish a program to add and maintain pedestrian signals along the corridor. Add pedestrian countdown signals at Sheriff Road at 45th Street and in areas with high levels of pedestrian activity.

Lighting Improvement Maintenance Program

- Establish a program to add and maintain pedestrian scale lighting at all intersec-tions, especially in areas with high levels of pedestrian activity.

Project No. 5: Roadway Lighting and Signage Improvements

Categories of Improvement
- *Urban Design*
- *Visual Quality*
- *Safety*

Lighting

AASHTO's *An Informational Guide for Roadway Lighting* was referenced to determine lighting levels and uniformity of luminance along the corridor and at the interchanges within the study area. According to AASHTO, the average maintained horizontal illuminance should be in the range of 0.6 to 0.8 footcandles for both mainline portions of the roadway and all ramps. A review of the lighting fixtures in the corridor was conducted to determine structure height, luminaire wattage, locations and lighting arm lengths. Based on these factors, three lighting conditions were determined within the corridor:

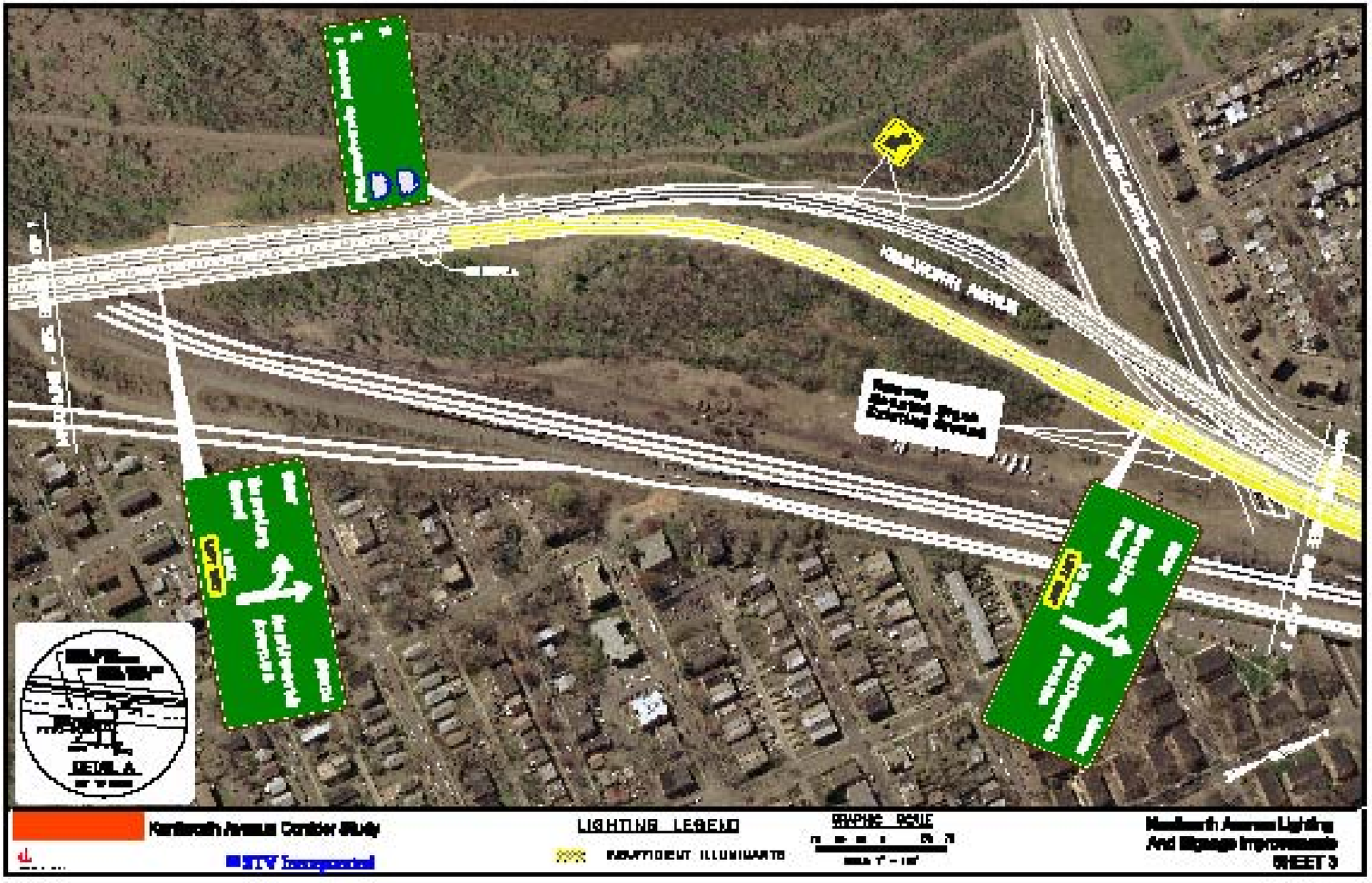
- locations of adequate lighting;
- locations where additional lighting is required; and
- locations where there is no lighting.

In the Near-Term, additional lighting will be installed throughout the corridor in the locations where lighting is lacking and where levels were found to be inadequate. This includes providing lighting under Kenilworth Avenue at Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue. Lighting would also be installed for the weaving section under Benning Road. The proposed light pole locations are shown on Figure 5.8.

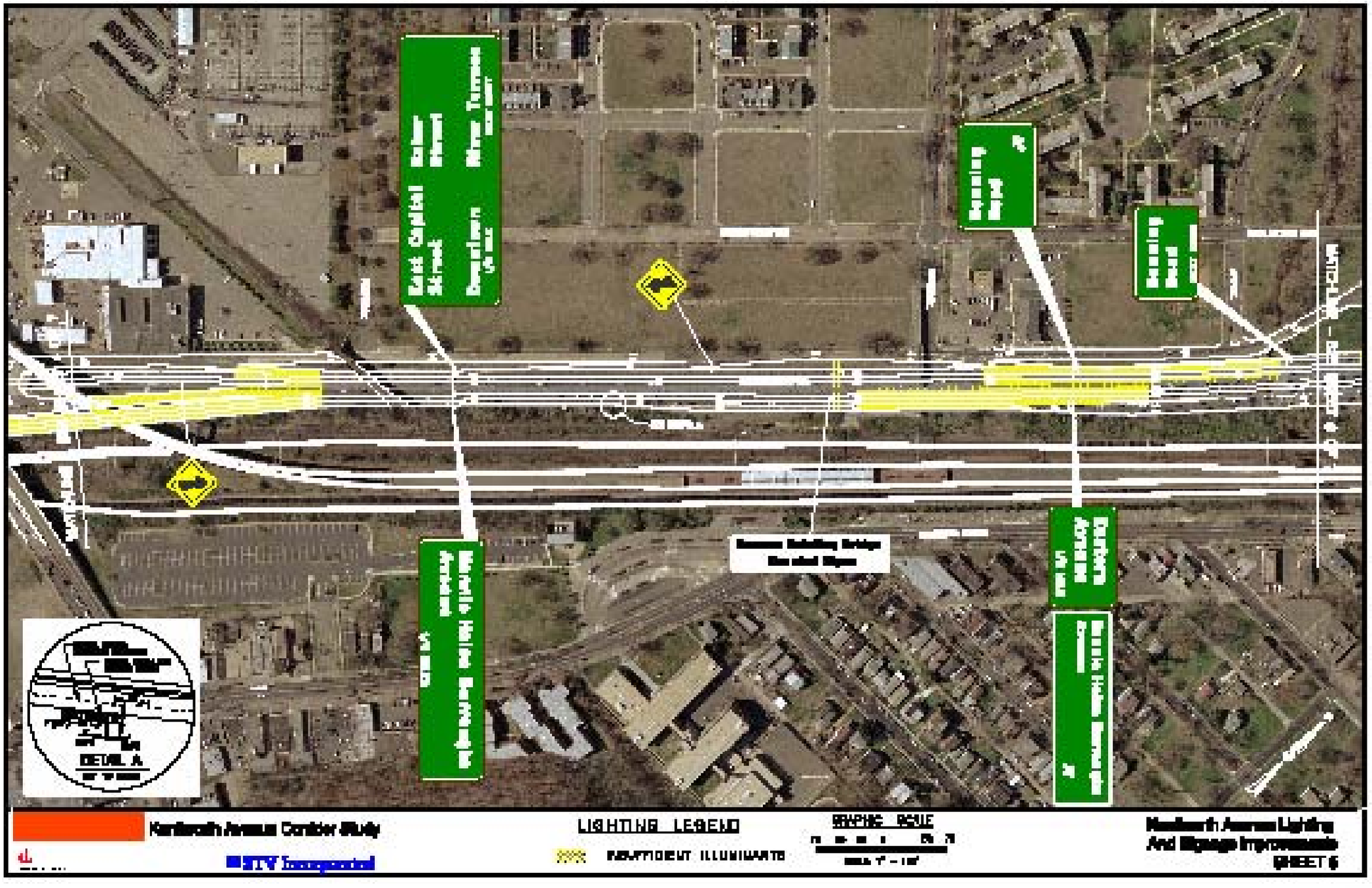
Signing

There is a mix of guide signing in the corridor that includes bridge-mounted, overhead and ground-mounted signs. Many of the signs are in poor condition and do not effectively communicate major exits within the corridor. Signing upgrades are proposed throughout the corridor as a Near Term Improvement. All signing will be upgraded to meet FHWA's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards. New overhead guide signs will be installed and consolidated where necessary for all exits to Pennsylvania Avenue, East Capitol Street, Benning Road, Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue, and Eastern Avenue. All existing exit signs for minor streets (i.e., Hayes Street) will be removed. Bridge mounted signs will be removed and replaced with overhead structures. Additional speed limit and lane merge warning signs are proposed throughout the corridor. At Benning Road the yield sign on the southbound Service Road will be removed. The existing R2-1 Yield sign at Benning Road will be replaced with a R1-1 STOP sign to control vehicles desiring to enter northbound Kenilworth Avenue at the Benning Road weaving section. Near Term signing improvements are shown in Figure 5.8.


East Pennsylvania Avenue
Kenilworth Avenue Corridor Study
LIGHTING LEGEND
Kenilworth Avenue Lighting And Signage Improvements
SHEET 2


HIGHCREST AVENUE
Kenilworth Avenue Corridor Study
LIGHTING LEGEND
INDEPENDENT ILLUMINANTS
GRAPHIC SCALE
Kenilworth Avenue Lighting
And Signage Improvements
SHEET 3


Kenilworth Avenue Corridor Study
LIGHTING LEGEND
Kenilworth Avenue Lighting
And Signage Improvements


East Capitol Street
Kenilworth Avenue
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Kenilworth Avenue Corridor Study
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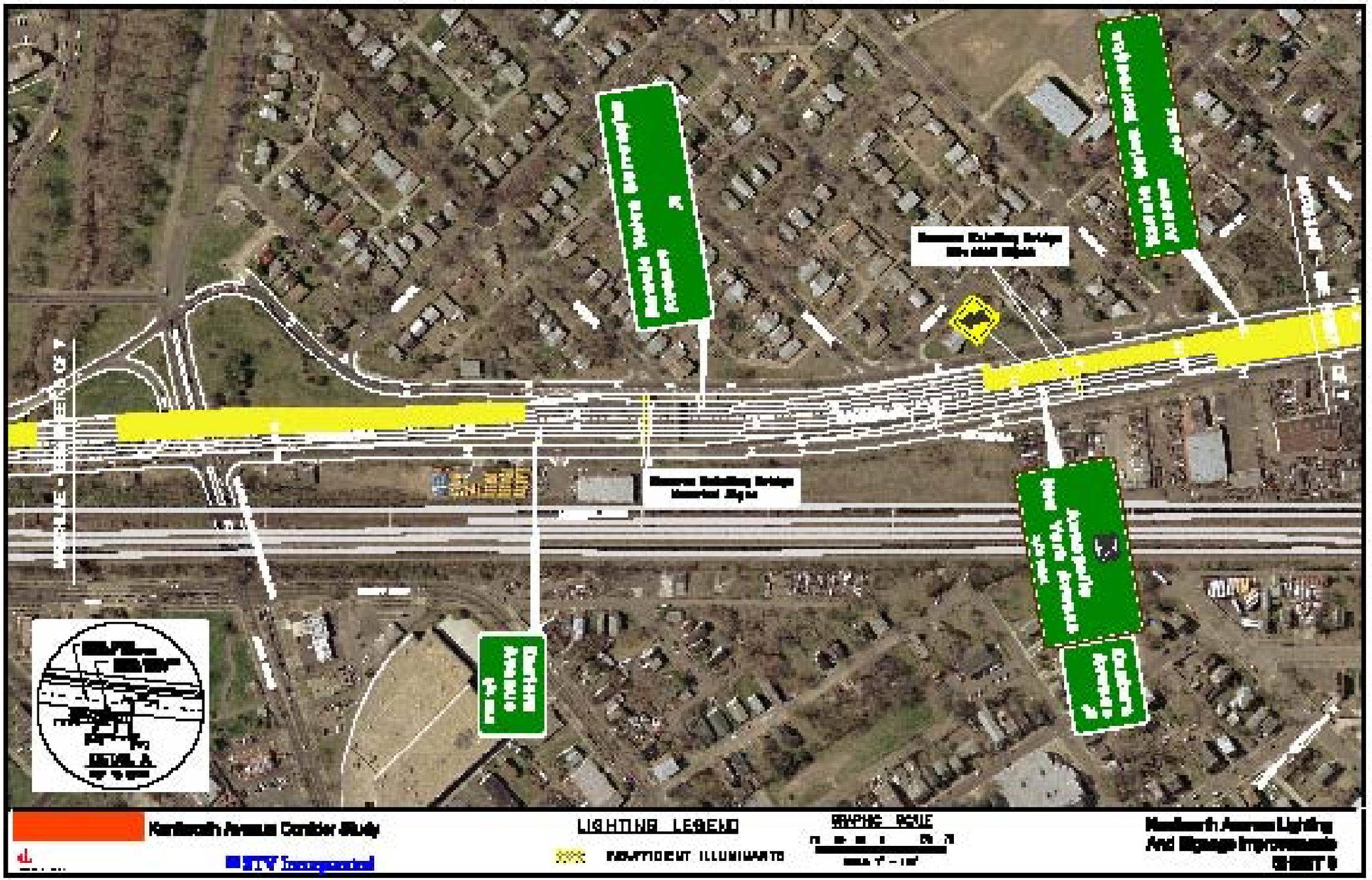
LIGHTING LEGEND
INDEPENDENT ILLUMINANTS
GRAPHIC SCALE
Kenilworth Avenue Lighting And Signage Improvements
SHEET 6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